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### CONTENTS

ISSUE NUMBER ONE  
JULY 1974

**TERROR TOMB** Untold riches lie hidden deep in the ancient Egyptian tomb of the High Priest Khartuka. Riches that are guarded by curse of the murderous mummy!

**LYCANKLUTZ** A killer wolf roamed the forest, eating the flesh of beautiful young girls! But the peddler knew how to stop a wolf! He had deadly silver-fanged fleas!

**THE HERO WITHIN** He was just a little boy with a big imagination. But when he was locked in the dark cellar, the things from his imagination came alive!

**HIGH-HEELLED NOISE** A flat tire, a rainy night, and a haunted house! Somehow, it seems like we've been here before. But who knows what new horrors lurk in the darkness?

**BLESS US FATHER** The alarm went out! "Stop the axe-murderer at all costs! He is armed and dangerous! He has a big belly, a white beard, red suit . . . and drives a slay!"

**JUDAS** They came in droves. Indestructible metal conquerors, ready to enslave all of mankind. Out an explosion massive enough to destroy the entire world, could save it!

**CHILD** His wife was dead! But the grief-stricken inventor had an idea. He would create a son from the bodies of dead animals! He would at last, have a true Child!

**THOUGH THEY WERE LIVING** The demon was summoned, out of the fires of hell! He was forced to obey his mistress: Kill the man who refused her love!

**TOP TO BOTTOM** A simple game! That's what they called it! Simple but deadly. Win, and you could have Heaven. Lose, and the world transforms into a nightmarish hell!

**DEMON IN THE COCKPIT** The war was on! And so was the search for the ultimate weapon! Atomic warfare was out of the question! Man had to kill with magic!

THE AIR IS ELECTRIFIED WITH TENSE EXCITEMENT AS A SMALL EXPEDITION PENETRATES DEEP INTO THE UNKNOWN CAVERN. THEY SEARCH FOR THE FORBIDDEN TOMB OF THE ANCIENT HIGH PRIEST **KHARTUMA**. GUARDED WHISPERS AND BANNED LEGENDS HINTED AT THE LIKELIHOOD OF A **HIDDEN TREASURE**... THOUGH OFFICIAL NATIVE RECORDS IGNORED THE POSSIBILITY. A FEW ARCHAEOLOGISTS SOUGHT THE FORGOTTEN EDIFICE FOR YEARS, BUT IT IS ONLY **NOW** THAT THIS CREW OF ADVENTUROUS SCHOLARS STUMBLE UPON THE ENTRANCE TO THIS MUSTY EGYPTIAN TOMB.

IT'S SO **BIG**  
...AND **SPOOKY**  
IN HERE!

JUST THINK, SANDY,  
WE'RE TREADING THESE  
STEPS WHERE NO ONE HAS  
WALKED FOR CENTURIES.

IT SURPASSES  
ALL MY EXPECTATIONS  
FOR SHEER **DEMONICAL**  
STRANGENESS.

LET'S GO  
BACK!

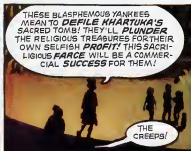
...EXPLORERS SEEKING GLORY, FORTUNE AND FAME. BUT THAT ISN'T  
WHAT THEY'LL FIND! NOT IN THE...

# TERROR TOMB





EVEN AS THE EXPLORERS BATHED IN THE **GLORY** OF FINDING THE TOMB, PLANS WERE BEING FORMED TO THWART THEIR DREAMS OF GRANDEUR...







**HURRY!...**  
THE TREASURES  
AWAIT US!

B-BUT,  
JACK... IT'S KIND  
OF SCAREY,  
ISN'T IT?

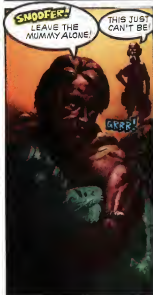


SNOOFER *DID* IT!  
IT'S THE SARCOPHAGUS  
...AND THE MUMMY  
OF KHARTUKA!

BUT *WHERE* IS THE  
TREASURE? IT'S SO  
BARE IN HERE, YOU'D  
THINK THIS MUMMY  
DIED A PAUPER!

RIGHT!  
THE LEGEND  
SAID **GOLD,**  
**SILVER,**  
**PRECIOUS**  
**STONES...**  
I'M SURE  
IT DID...

GRRRR!



**SNOOFER!**

LEAVE THE  
MUMMY ALONE!

THIS JUST  
CAN'T BE!

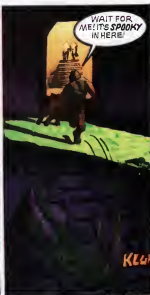
GRRR!



THE TREASURE  
MUST BE BACK IN THIS  
OTHER BUILDING.

**GOD**  
I HOPE SO!  
THE THOUGHT  
OF COMING  
ALL THIS  
WAY WITH  
NO GOLD...

KHARTUKA  
MUST BE JUST  
A GUARDIAN  
MUMMY!



WAIT FOR  
ME! IT'S SPOOKY  
IN HERE!

**KLEMP!**

THEY DROPPED HIM ON HIS HEAD! OH GREAT KHARTUKA, THIS CANNOT GO UNPUNISHED!

DOES THIS MEAN...?

YES!

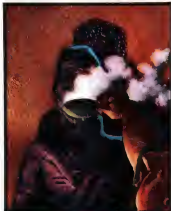


BREW THE *SPECIAL TEA*, WORMA. I KNOW THE MYSTIC SPELL WELL...! USE NINE NINA-LEAVES... ER NO... IT'S ELEVEN LEBEN LEAVES...OR



ORANGE PEKOE, MAYBE!

THE MYSTIC BREW IS *READY*, MASTER. WILL KHARTUKA *LIVE* AGAIN?



I THINK HE'S MOVING!  
*REVENGE, KHARTUKA.*  
**KILL!**



I TELL YOU, HE MOVED!

I DIDN'T SEE ANYTHING!



**KHARTUKA!**  
SEEK OUT THE INFIDELS!  
**DESTROY!**

DO YOU MIND IF I TAKE A NAP WHILE WE ARE WAITING?



KHARTUKA, ARISE  
YAWN? AND STRIKE DOWN THOSE WHO...  
YAWN?...COMMITTED THIS SACRILEGE...  
YAWN?



JOY-FILLED ADVENTURERS, THEIR ARMS FILLED WITH *PRECIOUS TREASURE* MARCH BACK THROUGH THE CAVERNOUS TOMB. THEY HAVE *FOUND* THE RICHES THEY SO LECHEROUSLY SOUGHT...





THE MYSTIC SECRET OF  
THE ANCIENTS WORKED!  
HE'S GOING NOW! KILL,  
KHARTUKA!

THAT HAT MAKES  
YOU LOOK LIKE A  
REAL EGYPTIAN  
PRINCESS

YEAH?

DOES THAT MEAN  
I'LL BE A MUMMY  
SOME DAY, TOO?

HEY! JUST  
REALIZED...WHERE  
IS HARDOFF BEY?

...AND WORMA?  
...AND THAT DOG  
SNOOFER? HERE,  
SNOOFER!

SNOOFER!  
WHOOPS!

WHAT  
THE...

OOF!

THUMP

YAAAAAAAAAAAA

EEEEEEEEEE

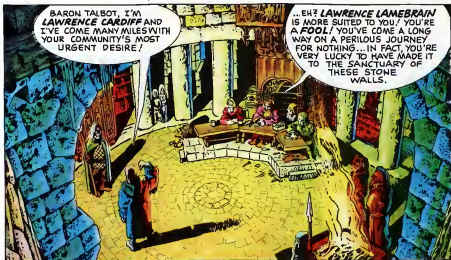




# LYCANKLUTZ

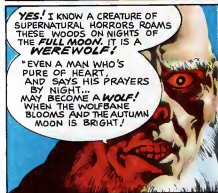
YES, *FRIGHT FREAKS*, WE'RE ENCOUNTERING ANOTHER *FOREST FIEND*! BUT THERE IS A DIFFERENCE THIS TIME. THIS TREMBLING TRAVELER IS AN ENTERPRISING OLD COOT WITH A PLAN TO AID THE MEEK FOLKS OF THIS PLAGUED LAND... AND HIMSELF.





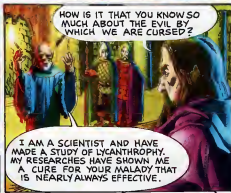
BARON TALBOT, I'M **LAWRENCE CARDIFF** AND I'VE COME MANY MILES WITH YOUR COMMUNITY'S MOST URGENT DESIRE!

...EH? **LAWRENCE LAMEBRAIN** IS MORE SUITED TO YOU! YOU'RE A **FOOL!** YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY ON A PERILOUS JOURNEY FOR NOTHING... IN FACT, YOU'RE VERY LUCKY TO HAVE MADE IT TO THE SANCTUARY OF THESE STONE WALLS.



**YES!** I KNOW A CREATURE OF SUPERNATURAL HORRORS ROAMS THESE WOODS ON NIGHTS OF THE **FULL MOON**. IT IS A **WEREWOLF!**

"EVEN A MAN WHO'S PURE OF HEART, AND SAYS HIS PRAYERS BY NIGHT... MAY BECOME A **WOLF!** WHEN THE WOLFBALE BLOOMS AND THE AUTUMN MOON IS BRIGHT!"



HOW IS IT THAT YOU KNOW SO MUCH ABOUT THE EVIL BY WHICH WE ARE CURSED?

I AM A SCIENTIST AND HAVE MADE A STUDY OF LYCANTHROPY. MY RESEARCHES HAVE SHOWN ME A CURE FOR YOUR MALADY THAT IS NEARLY ALWAYS EFFECTIVE.



HHMM... WELL TELL US!

I THOUGHT YOU'D BE RECEPTIVE. THROUGH LABORIOUS SELECTIVE BREEDING SURGICAL AND GENETIC MANIPULATION AND SUPERNATURAL INVOCATIONS, I HAVE DEVELOPED A STRAIN OF PREDATOR THAT IS ATTRACTED ONLY TO **WEREWOLVES**.



**BEHOLD!** THE INCREDIBLE **SILVER-FANGED FLEA!** ...YOU'RE FOR ONLY \$49.95. EASY TERMS. 100% DOWN.

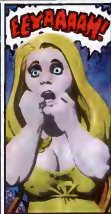
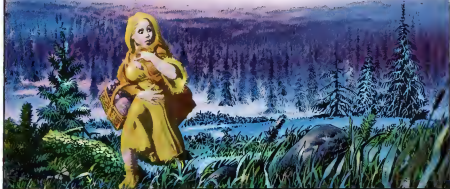


I CAN'T BELIEVE I SAT HERE AND LISTENED TO THIS.

THROW HIM BACK OUTSIDE!

**IT'LL WORK I TELL YOU!** THE WEREWOLF WILL ITCH TO DEATH FROM MY FLEAS' DEADLY BITES.

AS CARDIFF POUNDED THE TABLE, POINTED OUT THE SUPERIOR QUALITY OF HIS PRODUCT, AND CUT HIS PRICE FOR HIS VERY SPECIAL FRIENDS, A FOOLISH GIRL HURRIED TO HER HOME, HAVING DELAYED MUCH TOO LONG ON HER ERRANDS.





THE SOUNDS FINALLY CEASED AND AFTER A WHILE A RAGGED PEASANT BEGGED AN AUDIENCE AND BROUGHT FORTH THE BLOODY REMAINS OF THE GIRL.



BRIGHT DAWN VAINLY SOUGHT TO CHEER THE GLOOMY FOLK OF TALBOT CASTLE. ONLY CARDIFF THE FLEA SALESMAN, ABOUNDED WITH ENTHUSIASM.

OH, WHAT AAA *f*  
BEAUTIFUL MORNING  
OH, WHAT A  
BEAUTIFUL DAAAY! *f*

STOP THE SINGING! WE'LL  
ACCOMPANY YOU AND JUDGE  
YOUR PREPARATIONS. BUT I  
INSIST THAT YOUR ATTITUDE  
BE SOLOMNLV SYMPATHETIC  
TO OUR PLIGHT!

THE PLAN IS  
SIMPLE MY LORD BARON.  
WE'LL VISIT THE MOST  
RECENT LOCATIONS OF  
VICTIM'S DEATH'S AND  
LEAVE A SHEEP'S CARCASS  
WHOSE WOOL HAS BEEN  
INFESTED WITH MY  
BLOOD THIRSTY  
BUGS!

HEY! WATCH IT! I DON'T  
WANT THEM FLEAS  
ON ME!

DON'T  
WORRY!

THEY'RE  
ATTRACTED ONLY  
TO WERE-  
WOLVES!

THAT SHOULD DO IT, BARON  
TALBOT. IT IS NOW NEARING  
DUSK. AFTER THE MOON  
RISES, I CAN HOPE  
THE LY-CAN-THROPE  
WILL PASS NEAR.  
STOP FOR A FEW  
BITES OF THE SHEEP AND  
BE BITTEN HIMSELF HE'LL  
BE DEAD BY MORNING.

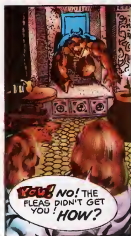
NOT QUITE!  
THERE'S SOMETHING  
ELSE WE CAN DO TO  
MAKE SURE THE PLAN  
SUCCEEDS.











JUST A FEW HOURS AGO, **LIONS** HAD RUN ACROSS THE TERRAIN WITHIN HIS HEAD, AND HE HAD **SLAIN** THE LIONS!



THE WOMAN WITH HIM DID NOT **KNOW** THIS **EXACTLY**, BUT SHE HAD READ THE **FILE** ON LUCIEN... "SHY, DANGEROUSLY OVER-IMAGINATIVE, TENDENCY TO RETREAT FROM ALL PROBLEMS INTO FANTASY..."



BUT PERHAPS HIS **NEW** GUARDIAN WOULD BE ABLE TO **BREAK** HIM OF THESE DISCONCERTING TRAITS. SHE HOPED SO...



FORCING HIMSELF TO FACE THE REAL WORLD FOR THE MOMENT, HE LOOKED AT HIS NEW HOME... IT WAS TO BE HIS **SEVENTH** SINCE HIS PARENTS DIED...



IT WAS TO BE ANOTHER MEETING OF **WILLS**, ALREADY MRS. GILLFOODER WAS INSPECTING HER NEW PAYING GUEST...



AND LUCIEN HAD NO DOUBTS AS TO WHO WOULD DOMINATE **HERE**. HE COULD NOT WIN! HE NEVER DID.

THE USUAL WORDS WERE SPOKEN...

AN INTRODUCTION WAS HALF-HEARTEDLY MADE...

HE HAD HEARD IT ALL BEFORE...!



PERHAPS WE SHOULD MENTION, THOUGH, THAT LUCIEN'S PARENTS BECAME DECEASED, BECAUSE SOME WILD DOGS TORE THEM APART. LUCIEN, QUITE UNDERSTANDABLY, TENDED TO BE NERVOUS AROUND ANYTHING VAGUELY CANINE...



# THE HERO WITHIN

STORY: STEVE SKEATES / ART: RICH CORBEN



HEY, YOU'RE AN UNFRIENDLY BOY, BUCKY IS MORE A PART OF OUR FAMILY THAN YOU ARE!

P-PLEASE, I-I'M AFRAID OF DOGS!



I WON'T HAVE ANY SNIVELING NONSENSE! YOU'LL HAVE TO BE PUNISHED ALREADY!

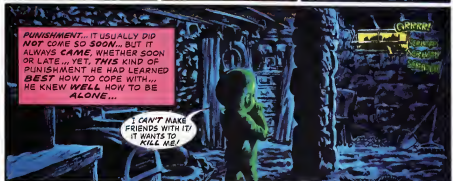
BUT, BUT...

HA, HA, HA, HA!



YOU CAN JUST STAY DOWN THERE UNTIL YOU'RE READY TO MAKE FRIENDS WITH BUCKY!

SLAM!



PUNISHMENT... IT USUALLY DID NOT COME SO SOON... BUT IT ALWAYS CAME, WHETHER SOON OR LATE... YET, THIS KIND OF PUNISHMENT HE HAD LEARNED BEST HOW TO COPE WITH... HE KNEW WELL HOW TO BE ALONE...

I CAN'T MAKE FRIENDS WITH IT! IT WANTS TO KILL ME!

ADULTS WERE DISCONCERTED BY LUCIEN'S ABILITY TO SLIP OUT OF THEIR REALITY, AND INTO HIS OWN FANTASIES...

BUT THEN, ADULTS NEVER SEEMED TO OFFER HIM VERY PLEASANT REALITIES.



HEY, WHAT A NEAT ROCK! I'LL BET IT'S GOT MAGIC STUFF IN IT!



I BET THIS MAGIC ROCK COULD TAKE ME TO ARABIA. I COULD JOIN AKA BABA AND THE FORTY THIEVES...

YET, IT WAS NOT ONLY ESCAPE FROM *REALITY* HE SOUGHT... BUT ESCAPE FROM THE *SELF* AS WELL... ESCAPE FROM THE *OUTSIDE* LUCIEN...



YES!  
IT IS MAGIC!  
I CAN FEEL IT  
WORKING...



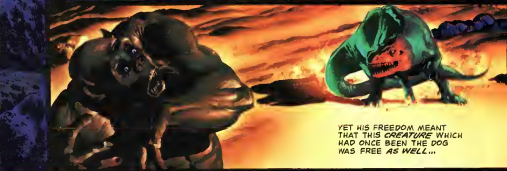
...FOR THERE WAS A *STRONGER, BRAVER,*  
*BETTER* LUCIEN THAT LIVED WITHIN...



...I CAN FEEL  
MYSELF  
CHANGING!



IT WAS INDEED *POWERFUL*  
MAGIC... THE DANK, DISMAL  
WALLS THAT HELD HIM THEIR  
CAPTIVE WERE GONE NOW...  
HE WAS *FREE*...



YET HIS FREEDOM MEANT  
THAT THIS *CREATURE* WHICH  
HAD ONCE BEEN THE *DOG*  
WAS *FREE* AS WELL...



AND, LUCIEN'S GREATEST  
FEAR WAS SOMETHING  
HE COULD *NOT* ESCAPE...

IT IS SOMETHING HE  
HAS TO FACE...



A THREATENING  
STANCE... AND SOMEHOW  
THE CREATURE THAT ONCE  
WAS DOG KNOWS IT IS OUT-  
CLASSSED... IT STANDS A  
FEW SECONDS, THEN TURNS  
TAIL... AND RUNS...

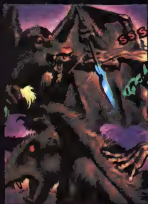
AND, THE BEING THAT ONCE WAS LUCIEN LOOKS  
ABOUT HIMSELF AT A WORLD TO BE EXPLORED...  
AND, AT ONCE, THE EXPLORATION BEGINS...



HELLLP!







*RUNNING... RUNNING... THEN LOOKING BACK,  
TO SEE THAT YOU HAVE OUT-DISTANCED YOUR FOE...*





AND, SURPRISED, THE CREATURE  
DOES NOT BACK OFF...



...NOT THIS  
TIME...



...NOT UNTIL...



HE FUMBLES TO REGAIN THE  
ROCK... FUMBLES TO SUSTAIN  
THE DREAM...



AND ONLY ONCE HE HAS TAKEN THE WOMAN'S HAND  
AGAIN, DOES HE NOTICE THE ADDITIONAL DAMAGE  
THE FIGHT HAS BROUGHT...



THE  
MAGIC  
ROCK!

YES, HE HAD FUMLED...  
AND HE HAD LOST...



GOT TO  
FIND IT AGAIN  
GET US BACK  
TO THAT  
WORLD...

HE HEARD A **SHRILL, UNCOMFORTABLE VOICE...**  
A VOICE THAT COULD ONLY EXIST IN THE **REAL**  
WORLD... HE TURNED AND MET **PIERCING**  
**GLARES...**

REALITY... EVERYTHING HAD **CHANGED...** HE  
WAS **LUCIEN NOW...** AND THE ONE HE HAD  
SO **HEROICALLY SAVED--**



**REACTION...**

**PUNISHMENT...**

**...AND AN UNEXPECTED INTRUDER...**



BUT THE **ROCK** WAS **GONE...**  
ROLLED SOMEWHERE  
PERHAPS... AND HE COULD  
NOT **CHANGE...** EVEN IF  
THE CHANGE WAS IN HIS  
MIND, IT WAS THE **ROCK**  
THAT SET IT OFF... HE COULD  
NOT **CHANGE!** HE COULD  
ONLY **SCREAM...**

THEY HEARD HIM UPSTAIRS  
...AND THEY **IGNORED** HIM  
...HE WAS ONLY TRYING TO  
GET **ATTENTION...** IT HAD  
BECOME A **CONTEST** OF  
WILLS, AND THEY WEREN'T  
ABOUT TO **GIVE IN...**  
HE'D **LEARN...**

**GNAAA!**

**GRRROOWRR!**

HERE'S ONE FOR ALL YOU STOIC POETS...IT'S LOADED WITH A LOTTA FINE SLIME RHYME, A GHOST HOST WITH CLEAVER FEVER WHO GOES GASHIN' WITH A PASSION, SOME STUN FUN, AND ALL THE CREEPY JOYS OF...

# The Low Spark of High Heeled Noise!



YES, IT WAS ALL THERE...ALL THE INGREDIENTS TO RAISE A HAIR. THE DARK FORBODING HOUSE TOPPING THE RISE...THE CHILL GLOOM OF STARLESS STORM-SWEPT SKIES. THE LOST TRAVELER. HE KNOWS NOT WHERE... AND HIS HESITANT TREAD UPON THE CREAKING STAIR.

HARD TO PLAY THIS STRAIGHT, RAINY NIGHT, SPOOKY HOUSE, AND ME... THE TRAVELING SALESMAN WITH A FLAT TIRE. GUESS IT'S CUSTOMARY FOR ME TO WONDER IF ANYONE'S HOME...

● HIS HEART FILLED WITH RELUCTANT DREAD, THE MAN WITH HIS HANKERCHIEF FURTIVELY WIPES HIS HEAD... HIS HAND, IT SHAKES SLIGHTLY AS HE BEGINS TO RAP, AND HIS KNOCK IS ANSWERED BY FOOTSTEPS A FAR SOFT TAP... SOMEWHERE CLOSE A DOG DOES GROWL, AND THE WIND IN THE DISTANCE BEGINS TO HOWL...

● BUT BEFORE THE STRANDED MAN MAY LEARN THE ANSWERS HE DOES SEEK, HE MUST FIRST LISTEN TO THE DOOR'S OMINOUSLY SLOW AND WHINING CREAK... AND FACE TWO PEOPLE WITH EXPRESSIONS OF SUSPICION, WHILE HE ENTREATINGLY EXPLAINS HIS VULNERABLE CONDITION...

● FLASH OF MOMENTARY DENIAL, AND HE PREPARES A RUEFUL SMILE... BUT HIS APPREHENSIONS SUBSIDE AND ARE RAPIDLY BANISHED, WHEN IT APPEARS THAT ALL OPPOSITION WILL SOON HAVE VANISHED...

YEAH? WHADDAYA WANT? DON'T YOU KNOW IT'S LATE?

AND YOU WANNA STAY HERE FOR THE NIGHT? UH-UH, NOTHING DOIN'! SEND HIM AWAY, HARRY!

BAK!  
BAK!  
BAK!

TAP  
TAP  
TAP

GUESS THAT SETTLES THE QUESTION... SOMEONE DEFINITELY IS HOME, NOW... ARE THEY FRIENDLY?

AND DO THEY HAVE A SPARE BEDROOM?

THAT'S WHY I'M BOTHERIN' YOU-- THAT AND THE RAIN. IF IT WEREN'T SO NASTY OUT I'D WALK TO AN ALL-NIGHT GAS STATION-- BUT IT'S PRETTY DESOLATE OUT HERE AND... OH YEAH, MY NAME'S DON GRAY AND I'VE GOT A FLAT TIRE DOWN THE ROAD.

I CAN'T DO THAT, MONA-- IT'S RAININ' BUCKETS OUT THERE! HE ONLY WANTS TO STAY ONE NIGHT-- PUT YOURSELF IN HIS PLACE.

COME ON IN, MR. GRAY-- DON'T MIND THE WIFE, SHE'S JUST A LITTLE SUSPICIOUS... DON'T BLAME HER, EITHER-- CAN'T TRUST ANYBODY NOWADAYS.

HERE, LEMME TAKE YOUR COAT. YOU'RE SOAKED! YOU WANNA BEER? IT'S COLD...

UH, NO THANKS. I'D JUST LIKE TO GET SOME REST-- SO I CAN BE ON MY WAY IN THE MORNING.

I'VE GOT A HUNCH IT'S MORE THAN MERE SUSPICION THAT'S BOTHERING THE LITTLE LADY HERE. WONDER IF THEY'VE GOT ANYTHING TO HIDE...

● ONCE INSIDE HE SENSES THE BLEAKNESS OF SHROUDED LIES, AND HIS PERCEPTIONS ARE CONFIRMED IN THE WOMAN'S GLOWING EYES... IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MAN AND WIFE HE HAS CAUSED A RIFT, AND HIS THOUGHTS INTUITIVELY BEGIN TO DRIFT...

HE MAN CALLED GRAY FOLLOWS HIS SOLICITOUS HOST GRATEFULLY, EVEN AS THE UNWILLING HOSTESS GLARES AFTER HIM HATEFULLY...

THE SPARE BEDROOM'S JUST DOWN THE UPSTAIRS HALL. THE SHEETS SHOULD BE CLEAN... WE DON'T **USE** THE ROOM MUCH...

I APPRECIATE YOUR HOSPITALITY, IF THERE'S ANYWAY I CAN REPAY YOU, I'D BE GLAD...

THE ROOM IS DUSTY AND CHOKED WITH FROTHY COBWEBS, AND GRAY'S FEELING OF ELATION AND RELIEF SLOWLY EBBS... HARD IT IS TO IMAGINE A ROOM EERIER, FOR IT PERFECTLY MATCHES THE HOUSE'S GRIM EXTERIOR...

AIN'T **MUCH** BUT IT'S THE BEST WE GOT! G'NIGHT, MR. GRAY... DON'T LET THE BEDBUGS BITE,

I HOPE THEY'RE THE **ONLY** THINGS WITH TEETH IN **THIS** ROOM.

OKAY, AND A NICE NIGHT TO YOU... AND YOUR **WIFE**.

AND FROM THE OPPRESSIVE PALL OF GLOOM'S SHADOWS WITHOUT NUMBER, HE SEEKS TO ESCAPE INTO THE EMBRACE OF SLUMBER... BUT THE COMFORT OF SLEEP IS ELUSIVE, IN THIS DARK ROOM WHERE UNSETTLING THOUGHTS BECOME OBTRUSIVE...

AND OUTSIDE ON THE SHADOW-SLIMED STAIR, FEET GO A'CLIMBING WITH SUPREME AND CONSCIOUS CARE...

MUST BE MY IMAGINATION... BUT I FEEL **DANGER** HERE. GOTTA QUIT ACTING LIKE A FRIGHTENED KID... GET SOME SLEEP. NOTHING TO FEAR IN THIS HOUSE... EXCEPT MY **FEARS**.

TAP...

TAP...

AND THE MIDNIGHT-MUTED HUSH OF THESE SINISTER FEET TAPPING, GOES UNNOTICED BY THE MAN NOW WRAPPED IN WEARY NAPPING...

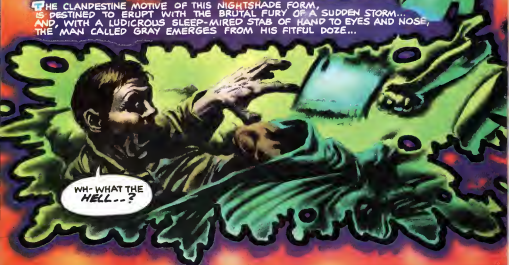
THE PERVADING SHADOWS, STYGIAN AND STEEPED IN MYSTERY, EMBRACE A STARK FIGURE REMINISCENT OF BORGIA, LUCRETIA INFAMOUS IN HISTORY...



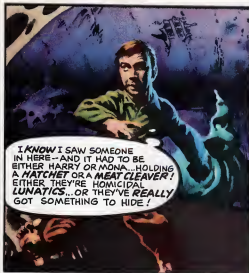
AND ONLY THE QUIETLY SMUG KNOWLEDGE OF THE LURKING NIGHT, IS PRIVILEGED TO THE SIGNIFICANTLY SILENT SIGHT... OF A MURDEROUSLY GLINTING WEAPON RAISED TO ITS FULLY LETHAL HEIGHT...



THE CLANDESTINE MOTIVE OF THIS NIGHTSHADE FORM, IS DESTINED TO ERUPT WITH THE BRUTAL FURY OF A SUDDEN STORM... AND, WITH A LUDICROUS SLEEP-MIRED STAB OF HAND TO EYES AND NOSE, THE MAN CALLED GRAY EMERGES FROM HIS FITFUL DOZE...



WH-WHAT THE HELL...?



I **KNOW** I SAW SOMEONE IN HERE--AND IT HAD TO BE EITHER HARRY OR MONA...HOLDING A **HATCHET** OR A **MEAT CLEAVER**! EITHER THEY'RE HOMICIDAL **LUNATICS**...OR THEY'VE **REALLY** GOT SOMETHING TO HIDE!

AND WITH HORROR PLAYING UPON HIS SOUL ITS RESOUNDING DIRGE-LIKE SONG, GRAY FRANTICALLY LEAPS FROM HIS BED TO FIND THE MIDNIGHT FIGURE GONE...

THE CHILL FINGERS OF FEAR-FRAUGHT APPREHENSION AND SUSPICION, POKE AT HIM TO SEARCH THE INKY CORRIDOR FOR SIGNS OF THE INCIDENTS REPETITION...



NO ONE OUT HERE EITHER...BUT I HEAR **VOICES** DOWNSTAIRS. SOUNDS LIKE AN **ARGUMENT**--



GOOD THING I TOOK OUT A **FIREARMS LICENSE**, NEVER KNOW WHAT A TRAVELING **SALESMAN**'LL RUN INTO.

...AND WHAT IF HE IS A **COP**, OR A **PRIVATE DICK**? THE WHOLE DEAL DEPENDED ON THE FACT THAT WE'RE **SO ISOLATED** OUT HERE...THAT NO ONE'D EVEN **COME BY**. WE'VE GOT TO GET RID OF HIM!

DON'T BE SO PARANOID, FOR **CHRIS**SAKE! HE'S JUST A LOUSY **SALESMAN**!

SO, TOWARD THE SOUND OF VOICES RAISED IN ARGUMENT MOST SHRILL, GRAY DESCENDS THE STAIRS, CAREFUL TO BE MOST STILL...

MONA, SHE OPENS HER MOUTH AND SHOOT'S SOMEONE DEAD... AND HARRY, HE PRAYS THAT, INSTEAD, SHE'D JUST SHUT UP AND GET OUT OF HIS HEAD...

AND HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT? YOU'RE SO STUPID YOU COULDN'T EVEN THINK OF A WAY TO GET RID OF THAT MISERABLE **WIFE** OF YOURS! IF IT WEREN'T FOR **ME** YOU'D **STILL** BE MARRIED TO HER!

YEAH? WELL, A **MEAT CLEAVER** AIN'T EXACTLY WHAT I CALL THE MOST **INGENIOUS** METHOD! NOW WHY DON'T YOU JUST **SHUT UP** AND LEAVE ME **ALONE** ?!





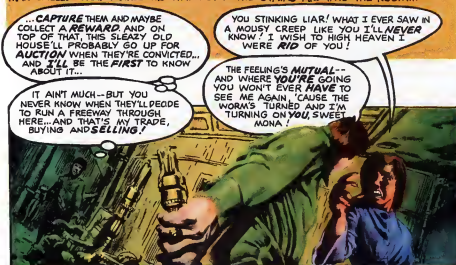
THE ARGUMENT SIZZLES WITH DEPRECATING WORDS AND TONE, BECOMING MORE SEVERE... AND RAPIDLY DISSOLVING A FORMER RELATIONSHIP ONCE MOST PEAR...



EVEN AS GRAY RECOILS FROM THE CRIMINAL REVELATIONS IN MORTAL DREAD, THE THOUGHTS IN HIS HEAD AND THE IMPLICATIONS THEREOF SO SWIFTLY SPREAD...



AND THROUGH THE VEIL OF DARKNESS, PARTING THE TAPESTRY OF GLOOM, THE MAN CALLED GRAY MAKES HIS WAY DOWN THE STAIRS AND INTO THE ROOM...





THE ONE CALLED HARRY HAS CLEARLY HAD QUITE ENOUGH, AND HIS NEW PARTNERS LIFE HE PROCEEDS WITH CANDLESTICK TO SNUFF... AND THIS SCENE OF FRENZIED VIOLENCE GRAY IS HELD TO EXPOSURE... HE QUICKLY BLANCHES, HELPLESSLY LOSING HIS COMPOSURE...



UT SEIZING GRAY ARE THOUGHTS OF LIMITLESS GREED, AND UPON THIS INTANGIBLE COMMODITY HIS RETURNING COURAGE IS ABLE TO FEED...

ALL RIGHT, HOLD IT RIGHT **THERE**, HARRY! YOU'VE JUST SAVED THE TAXPAYERS THE COST OF **ONE** TRIAL... AND ENSURED YOURSELF OF BEING TRIED FOR **TWO** MURDERS...

WHA...? YOU **SAW** IT? BUT IT WAS **SELF-DEFENSE**! SHE CAME TO MY BED LAST NIGHT... WITH A MEAT CLEAVER! SHE WAS TRYING TO **KILL** ME! AND BESIDES, **SHE'S** THE ONE WHO ACTUALLY KILLED MY WIFE! I DIDN'T! I **WON'T** GO TO PRISON...



HOUGHTS OF PRISON'S CONFINEMENT THROUGH OLD AGE, MAKE SOMETHING **SNAP** WITHIN THIS HARRY AND HE ATTACKS GRAY IN BLIND RAGE...

ERSERK. THE MAN CHARGES STRAIGHT INTO FLASH AND EXPLOSION... AND HIS LIFE SEEPS AWAY, UNDERGOES THE FINAL AND IRREVOCABLE EROSION...

I WON'T GO TO PRISON! I **WON'T**! I'LL BE FREE IF IT **KILLS** ME! DO YOU **HEAR**? I'LL BE FREE IF IT---

.. **KILLS** ME!

UHHHNN!

**BALAM!**



UPON THIS SCENE OF CARNAGE AND DOUBLE DEATH, THE MAN CALLED GRAY  
LEVELS A COOL SURVEY...  
AS THE CROOKED SMILE OF EVIL GREED UPON HIS LIPS BEGINS TO PLAY...



AND BEFORE THE CRAVING TO  
SLAKE THIRST'S URGE DOES PASS,  
THE RUTHLESS GRAY NOTICES  
A FULL AND FROTHY GLASS...



AND GRAY CLUTCHES AT HIS  
THROAT, EXPERIENCING THE  
RESIDUE OF MONA'S HATE...  
A GLASS OF BEER FOR HARRY  
DRUGGED WITH POISON'S  
SWIFT TANT...



BUT FOR PHONE CALLS IT IS TOO  
LATE AND AS GRAY FEELS HIS  
LIFE ESSENCE BEGIN TO FADE  
AND SLOWLY SAP... THERE  
COMES A SOUND TO CHILL  
HIS DYING SOUL, THE  
PORTENTOUS SOUND OF  
A SOFT TAP...



AND THE DYING GRAY REALIZES THAT NO MATTER HOW WELL THE DEATH OF THE BODY IS  
PLAYED... THE SPIRIT OF THE OLD HOUSE'S MISTRESS CANNOT BE DESTROYED...





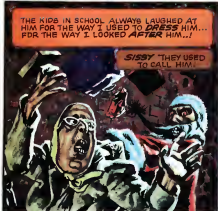
# Bless Us, Father...





POOR RANDOLPH! HE'S TRIED SO **HARD** TO MAKE **FRIENDS!**

HE'S ALWAYS BEEN A **MAMA'S-BOY**, DOROTHY!



THE KIDS IN SCHOOL ALWAYS LAUGHED AT HIM FOR THE WAY I USED TO **DRESS** HIM... FOR THE WAY I LOOKED **AFTER** HIM...

**SISSY** THEY USED TO CALL HIM.



THOSE **RUFFIANS** ALWAYS TREATED POOR RANDOLPH SO **MEAN!**

HE **HATED** YOU FOR THAT, DOROTHY! **BLAMED** YOU FOR NOT LETTING HIM HAVE ANY **FRIENDS!**



MOMMY, HOWCUM DADDY DOESN'T LIVE WITH US ANYMORE?

WHEN YOU GET TO BE A BIG GIRL, MOMMY'LL EXPLAIN IT ALL TO YOU, BABY!

GOT ANOTHER **CHRISTMAS-KILLER** FOR YOU, WILLY!

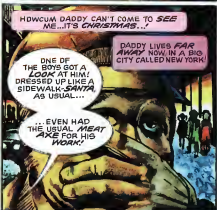
A REAL **ZINGO!** ESCAPED FROM THE **NUT HOUSE** LAST NIGHT!



I **MISS** HIM, MOMMY! WHY DID HE **LEAVE?**

DADDY HAD TO **FORGET**, HONEY!

**CHOPPED-UP** A WOMAN OVER ON THE WEST SIDE, NOT FAR FROM HERE!



HOWCUM DADDY CAN'T COME TO **SEE** ME...IT'S **CHRISTMAS...**

DADDY LIVES **FAR AWAY** NOW, IN A BIG CITY CALLED **NEW YORK!**

ONE OF THE BOYS GOT A **LOOK** AT HIM! DRESSED UP LIKE A **SIDEWALK-SANTA**, AS USUAL...

...EVEN HAD THE USUAL **MEAT AXE** FOR HIS **WORK!**



LIAR! HE ALWAYS LOVED ME! THAT'S WHY WE'VE BEEN SO CLOSE...

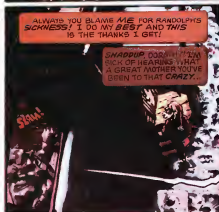
HE'D KILL YOU IF HE HAD THE GUTS!



IT'S YOU HE'S ALWAYS HATED! THE WAY YOU'VE ALWAYS YELLED AT ME... ALWAYS BEAT ME!

THE ONLY THING HE COULDN'T STAND WAS YOUR MESSING!  
OR KID, IT'S NO WONDER HE TURNED OUT LIKE ME LUC!

YOU'RE ALWAYS DRUNK ON CHRISTMAS, DICK! YOU'RE A BUM!



ALWAYS YOU BLAME ME FOR RANDOLPH'S SICKNESS! I DO MY BEST AND THIS IS THE THANKS I GET!

SHADDUP DORN! I'M SICK OF HEARING WHAT A GREAT MOTHER YOU'VE BEEN TO THAT CRAZY...



IS NEW YORK PRETTY LIKE SAN FRANCISCO, MOMMY?

NEW YORK IS A BIG, LONELY PLACE, BABY!

THINGS LIKE THIS JUST DON'T HAPPEN WHERE I COME FROM!

THEY ONLY HAPPEN HERE ON CHRISTMAS... JUST LIKE CLOCK WORK!

WATCH OUT FOR HIM, WILLY...!



YOU MEAN NOBODY LIVES THERE?

NOT EXACTLY LOVER! SO MANY PEOPLE LIVE THERE THAT IT'S HARD FOR THEM ALL TO GET ALONG!

DAMN! WHY DOES A THING LIKE THIS HAVE TO HAPPEN ON CHRISTMAS!

WHY CAN'T PEOPLE GET ALONG!



YOU MEAN THEY FIGHT LIKE YOU AND DADDY USED TO...?

WELL...

YOU BEEN SCREECHIN' AT ME FOR TWENTY-ODD YEARS WOMAN... I'VE HAD IT...



**CRAZY!!** DON'T YOU CALL MY SON **CRAZY!**  
HE'S **SICK...** THAT'S ALL! HE'LL GET BETTER...  
AND THEN, MR. PERFECT-FATHER, HE'LL  
**SHOW YOU...**

I NEVER CLAIMED TO  
BE FATHER OF THE YEAR,  
DOROTHY, BUT AT LEAST  
I **ADMIT** MY MISTAKES  
WITH THAT BOY!



**AH...** FINALLY  
YOU ADMIT YOU'RE  
TO **BLAME** FOR THE  
WAY RANDOLPH IS!

MY ONLY MISTAKE  
WAS TO PICK **YOU** AS  
HIS MOTHER! HE KEPT  
SO MUCH **HATE**  
LOCKED INSIDE HIM...  
JUST AS YOU KEPT  
HIM **LOCKED** IN HERE!  
OH, HOW HE **LOATHED**  
**YOU**, DOROTHY!



HE **HATES**  
**YOU!**

I DON'T DENY THAT,  
DOROTHY! HE'D **KILL** ME  
IF HE WASN'T LOCKED UP  
IN THAT **PLACE...**



...LITTLE GIRLS SHOULDN'T  
BE SO **INQUISITIVE!**

C'MON  
GIRLIE... WE JUST  
WANT YOU TO  
SPREAD A LITTLE  
**CHRISTMAS**  
**CHEER...**



IS DADDY **HAPPY** IN  
NEW YORK, MOMMY?

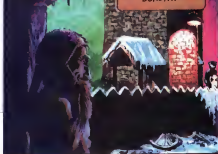


YOUR FATHER,  
**ALWAYS** HAD A GOOD  
TIME, BABY!



YOU BLAME ME FOR THAT, TOD, DON'T YOU, JACK? YOU BLAME ME FOR WHAT RANDOLPH DID TO THAT *LITTLE GIRL*...

WE'RE *BOTH* TO BLAME FOR THAT DOROTHY!



WE NEVER GAVE RANDOLPH ENOUGH LOVE! AND WHEN HE WAS *SPURNED* BY GIRLS HIS OWN AGE...HE...HE HAD TO TURN *ELSEWHERE* FOR THAT LOVE...!

THAT POOR, POOR *LITTLE GIRL*...



RANDOLPH'S CLOUDED MIND MUST BE BLAMING *HER* FOR WHERE HE IS TODAY ... LOCKED IN THAT *INSTITUTION*!

IT'S *OUR* FAULT, DOROTHY... OUR FAULT! AS *PARENTS*...!



MOMMY, YOU AND DADDY AREN'T *MARRIED* ANYMORE, ARE YOU?

DO ALL FIVE-YEAR OLDS ASK AS MANY *QUESTIONS* AS YOU, SWEETHEART?



DANIELLE'S MOMMY AND DADDY GOT A *DIVORCE*, TOD...

AND DANIELLE SAYS THAT MEANS SHE DON'T HAVE A *DADDY* NO MORE!



IS DADDY *STILL* MY DADDY, MOMMY?

OH, BABY! OF *COURSE* HE IS! JUST BECAUSE DADDY IS NO LONGER *MARRIED* TO MOMMY DOESN'T M...MEAN...





DO YOU THINK RANDOLPH IS HAVING A  
GOOD CHRISTMAS, JACK?

IF HE WASN'T, HE'D  
FIND A WAY TO COME  
HOME TO US,  
DOROTHY!



MUMMY, WHY ARE  
YOU CRYING?

I...IT'S *NOTHING*,  
BABY. ON DAYS  
LIKE *THIS*... YOUR  
MOTHER JUST  
WONDERS IF SHE  
DID THE *RIGHT*  
THING...



I'M GLAD HE'S *HAPPY*  
FOR ONCE, JACK!

IT'S BEEN  
SO *SELDOM*  
THAT POOR  
RANDOLPH HAS  
EVER BEEN  
ABLE TO BE  
*HAPPY*!



I DON'T *UNDERSTAND*, MOMMY!

YOU WILL *SOMEDAY*,  
LITTLE ONE...

...*SOMEDAY*...



WE HAVE TO LIVE WITH THAT  
DOROTHY! WHEN PARENTS *FAIL*, THEY HAVE  
TO LIVE WITH THAT UNTIL THE DAY THEY  
*DIE*...!!

**EEEEEE**  
**BANG! BANG! BANG!**



MOMMY, IS DADDY  
*THINKING* ABOUT  
ME TONIGHT?

OH, BABY, YOUR  
DADDY IS *THINKING*  
ABOUT YOU *ALL*  
THE TIME!

AND ON THIS  
NIGHT IN PARTICULAR,  
I'M SURE THAT  
YOUR FATHER IS  
*THINKING* OF NOTHING  
*BUT* YOU...



YOU'LL BE THE DEATH OF THE PARTY IN YOUR HORRIBLE

# ZOMBIE MASK

by VERNE LANGOON

**SO LIFELIKE,  
THAT PEOPLE WILL  
SURELY THINK YOU'RE  
DEAD!**

**REALISTIC HAIR AND  
SKIN JUST LIKE A  
REAL ZOMBIE  
-{YECCH!}-**

**WEAR IT AT  
YOUR OWN RISK**

THE ZOMBIE MASK COVERS YOUR ENTIRE HEAD. PUT ON A SCARF, COAT AND GLOVES WHEN YOU WEAR THIS FANTASTIC MASK. WALK AROUND THE BLOCK & THE NEIGHBORS WILL PROBABLY GO OUT OF THEIR MINDS! WOW!

CAPTAIN COMPANY, Dept. DS  
P.O. Box 430, Murray Hill Station  
New York, New York 10016

Please RUSH me the Verne Langoon  
ZOMBIE MASK. I enclose \$39.50 plus  
\$1.50 postage & handling (Total  
\$41.00).

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

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**SORRY, NO C.O.D.'S  
OFFER GOOD IN U.S.A. ONLY**



ONLY  
**\$39.<sup>50</sup>**

This fantastically convincing Hollywood ZOMBIE mask is made of heavy rubber and carefully painted by hand. It's very flexible, and fits the whole head perfectly. The mask was especially created by leading Hollywood makeup artist, VERNE LANGOON (you've seen his work often in the pages of FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND). Now you can have this eye-popping mask for your very own! Astound your family and friends and be the "Death of the Party!"—That is, if anyone's still around after you take off this ZOMBIE mask!



LT. ROBERT ST JOHN SITS HUNCHED  
OVER AN EVER-FLICKERING VISI-  
SCREEN! THE PICTURE IS BLEAK-GRAY!

THERE ARE WARSHIPS... THOUSANDS  
OF THEM... STREAKING DIRECTLY  
TOWARD EMERALD EARTH!

THE SOLAR CORPS OFFICER KNOWS HE  
IS THE ONLY MAN ALIVE WHO CAN  
STOP THEM! UNFORTUNATELY, FATE  
HAS CHOSEN HIM TO PLAY THE ROLE  
OF...

# JUDAS

WHAT ARE THE LAST LONELY  
THOUGHTS OF AN ISOLATED  
HUMAN WITH MERE MINUTES TO  
LIVE? WE SHALL NEVER KNOW...  
UNTIL WE CONFRONT DEATH'S  
COLD VISAGE!



BUT LT. ST JOHN KNOWS... KNOWS ALL TOO WELL!

ST JOHN! DEEP  
SPACE PROBES INDICATE  
WE ARE UNDER  
IMMINENT THREAT OF  
INVASION!

THE UN HAS  
CHOSEN COL.  
IVAN GORGOVICH  
TO HEAD EARTH'S  
LAST HOPE...  
PROJECT  
OMEGA!

YOU  
WILL BE  
BACK-UP MAN  
FOR THIS VITAL  
OPERATION!

ONLY ONE GOAL RANKS  
WITH PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE  
...WINNING!

ST JOHN'S ENTIRE EXISTENCE  
HAS BEEN DEVOTED TO  
SAVORING THE UNBRIDLED  
JOYS OF FAR-FLUNG  
FAME AND FORTUNE...



BEEP!

STORY: RICH MANGOPOULOS / ART: RICH CORBEN

START A DYCLE

...AND HE WAS WILLING TO STOP AT NOTHING TO  
ACHIEVE IT...

I'VE CROSSED  
THE MAIN POWER  
TERMINALS OF THE  
FLIGHT  
SIMULATOR!

WHEN THE  
GOOD COLONEL  
ACTIVATES THE  
UNIT HE'LL BE.

...INCLUDING MURDER!

INCINERATED! THAT WAS  
THE ONLY WORD ST JOHN COULD  
THINK OF WHEN HE HEARD THE  
COSMONAUT'S SEARING SCREAM, AND  
SMELLED THE NOISOME FOULNESS  
OF SCORCHED FLESH!

**BEEP!**

SOMETHING'S GONE  
WRONG... DANGEROUSLY  
DRASTICALLY  
AWRY!

YESSIR!

WE'VE NO OTHER  
ALTERNATIVE. ST JOHN  
... YOU MUST HEAD  
PROJECT  
OMEGA!

HISTORY! HE WAS MAKING HISTORY! AT LAST HE  
WAS CLAIMING THE ELUSIVE DESTINY THAT WAS  
RIGHTFULLY HIS!



YET, THE SENSATION WAS SOMEHOW EMPTY...  
MEANINGLESS! IT WAS NOT THE GRAND EUPHORIA  
HE WAS SO DESPERATELY SEEKING...

ST JOHN HAS TASTED SUCCESS IN IT'S MANY FORMS... BUT NOW FINDS THEM ALL MOLLOW... LACKING!



LOOKING DEATH CAN DO THAT TO A MAN... BUILD A WALL AROUND HIM... MAKE HIM FEEL SEPARATED AND ALONE!



SOLAR CORPS LIEUTENANT ROBERT ST JOHN WAS ROCKETED ALOFT TODAY ABOARD A SPECIALLY DESIGNED, CAMOUFLAGED SPACE CAPSULE... WHERE HE'LL REMAIN IN ORBIT FOR SIX MONTHS WAITING TO INTERCEPT AN ARMADA OF UNKNOWN, ALIEN ATTACKERS!



THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD HAVE UNITED IN A COMMON CAUSE OF BUILDING THE VERY FIRST COBALT BOMB! THE AMERICAN ASTRONAUT ACTING LIKE A PROVERBIAL TROJAN HORSE WILL DETONATE THE DOOMSDAY WEAPON WHEN THE INVADERS COME WITHIN RANGE!

AND NOW THE LOCAL SCENE! RIOT POLICE AGAIN FIRED TEAR GAS AT MOBS PROTESTING BEFORE THE WHITE HOUSE! THE DEMONSTRATORS CLAIMED WASHINGTON IS NOT FUNDING SUFFICIENT MEDICAL AID TO THE POOR!

MORE ON THIS AND OTHER TOP HEADLINES, AFTER A WORD FROM OUR SPONSOR...!

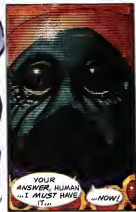
ANXIETY! A DREAD EMOTION THAT MAKES MEN SWEAT! IT'S A GODLESS FEELING TO DIE ALONE! DON'T YOU AGREE, LIEUTENANT?

DON'T YOU...?









WHAT I HAVE TO SAY PROBABLY DOESN'T MEAN MUCH... BUT MAYBE SOMEDAY YOU'LL REMEMBER IT AND THINK OF ME...

AT ONE TIME... I USED TO LOVE YOU, BOB... LOVE YOU VERY MUCH!

GOODBYE, DARLING! I HOPE YOU CAN FIND PEACE WITH YOURSELF!

ST JOHN SEES HIMSELF THE WAY HE REALLY IS! BEHIND THE MERO LURKS A BASE-BORN COWARD!



GOO HELP ME!

MY ANSWER IS... YES!

THE YOUNG ASTRONAUT WALKS LIKE A MAN IN A DREAM UP THE RAMP OF THE YHAN FLAGSHIP!



...A DREAM THAT IS SWIFTLY BROKEN... AS A ROARING SUIT-RADIO REPORTS AUTOMATIC ENGINES HAVE BLAZED INTO LIFE... FOREVER EXILING THE DREAD BOMB FROM THE SOLAR SYSTEM!

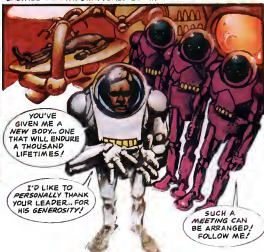
HE HAS KEPT HIS HALF OF THE BARGAIN! A TRIO OF GLISTENING METAL CREATURES ESCORTS HIM TO AN OPERATING CUBICLE... WHERE THEY WILL COMPLETE THE FACT!

LT. ST JOHN IS STRAPPED DOWN BY STAR-SURGEONS! A DRUG-GAS CAUSES THE HUMAN TO SLEEP!



THE ABSTRACT ELEMENT OF TIME PASSES. THE NOW-IMMORTAL MAN AWAKES TO DISCOVER HIS BRAIN HAS BEEN TRANSPLANTED INTO AN ALIEN MECNO-FORM!

A PLAN QUICKLY TAKES SHAPE! PERHAPS THE LIEUTENANT CAN USE THESE STRANGELY HONOR-BOUND BEINGS TO SALVAGE HIS OWN SHATTERED EGO...!



YOU'VE GIVEN ME A NEW BODY... ONE THAT WILL ENDURE A THOUSAND LIFETIMES!

I'D LIKE TO PERSONALLY THANK YOUR LEADER... FOR HIS GENEROSITY!


SUCH A MEETING CAN BE ARRANGED! FOLLOW ME!

ST JOHN SOON FINDS HIMSELF IN THE  
HIGHLORD'S PRIVATE QUARTERS...



# EPilogue





IT IS **ENDED** NOW, CHILD. THE SMILES, THE WARMTH, THE  
**LOVE...** ALL ARE **GONE FOREVER!** NOTHING REMAINS BUT THE FRIGID  
**CORPSE** YOU HOLD SO AWKWARDLY AND YET SO TENDERLY.

ALL THAT IS LEFT ARE YOUR  
HOT, SEARING **TEARS** BURNING  
YOUR CHEEKS AND KISSING  
YOUR LIPS...! LIPS WHICH  
QUIVER AND PULSATE WITH THE  
SHOCK, THE HORROR, AND THE  
SICKENING REALIZATION...  
THE **DADDY** IS DEAD!

# CHILD

YOU KNOW HOW IT **ENDS**, CHILD! BUT YOU NEVER DID KNOW HOW IT **BEGAN**. YOU WERE NOT THERE TO SEE THE SKIES DARKEN WITH **GLOOM**... TO FEEL **TEARS** DRIBBLE FROM THE CLOUDS... TO WATCH THE TERRIBLE **SORROW** ON YOUR FATHER'S FACE AS HE LAID HIS BELOVED **WIFE** TO REST...

YOU NEVER EVEN GAVE ME A CHILD. I WANTED A SON LIKE JERRY'S... BUT YOU **CHEATED** ME! IT'S NOT RIGHT **ELLIE**... SOB...

IT'S NOT FAIR, **ELLIE**! IT'S NOT FAIR THAT YOU DIED AND LEFT ME ALONE!

ONLY **JEROME LIEDERMAN** AND HIS SON WERE THERE TO SHARE YOUR DADDY'S **SORROW**! GOOD OLD **JERRY**, DADDY'S BEST FRIEND... AND HIS **LANDLORD**...

BARTON, YOU'VE GOT TO **FORGET** **ELLIE**... FORGET THE PAST! YOU'VE GOT YOUR WHOLE LIFE AHEAD OF YOU...

YOU'RE A **BRILLIANT** SCIENTIST, BARTON, WITH A **PROMISING** FUTURE! LOSE YOURSELF IN YOUR **WORK**... TRY TO FORGET **ELLIE**! YOU CAN LIVE **RENT FREE** FOR AWHILE!

THAT'S IT, **JERRY**. I'LL **CREATE** THE SON **ELLIE** NEVER GAVE ME!

AND THE FIRST PERSON TO **DOUBT** YOUR FATHER'S **SANITY**...

THAT WAS WHERE IT **STARTED**, CHILD. THAT WAS THE MOMENT OF YOUR **UNEARTHLY CONCEPTION**. THAT VERY SAME NIGHT YOUR FATHER PUT YOU **TOGETHER** FROM PIECES OF **BIOLOGICAL EXPERIMENTS**, **HALF ROTTEN** IN HIS LONG UNUSED **LABORATORY** ON **BLUECHERRY HILL MANSION**!

I SHALL HAVE A SON WHO WILL NEVER GROW **OLDER**... NEVER BECOME **MATURE**! ALWAYS... ALWAYS WILL HE WORSHIP HIS FATHER!

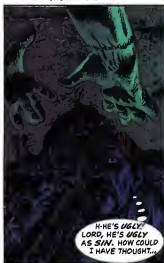
AND I WILL BE **PROUD** TO BE THE FATHER OF A BOY WITH THE **MUSCLES OF A BULL**, THE **EYES OF AN EAGLE**!

I'M GOING TO **HAVE** A SON, **ELLIE**! I'M GOING TO **HAVE** A SON!

STITCH BY STITCH, PIECE BY PUTRID PIECE THE WORK *PROGRESSED* UNTIL THE *UGLY*, DISTORTED FRAME OF A *HUMANOID CHILD* LAY UPON THE WORKBENCH OF THE CRAZED SCIENTIST.



YOU SAW HIM...YOUR DADDY. YOU STRETCHED YOUR LOVING ARMS TO **EMBRACE** HIM. YOU **ADVANCED**. BUT YOU DIDN'T COMPREHEND THE LOOK OF **HORROR** WHICH SLOWLY DROPPED IT'S SHADOW ACROSS HIS FACE.



H-HE'S UGLY!  
LORD, HE'S UGLY  
AS SIN. HOW COULD  
I HAVE THOUGHT...



I'VE GOT  
TO **UNDO** THIS  
DREADFUL **MIS-  
TAKE** AND **DE-  
STROY** IT!

**CONFUSION.** DADDY RAN  
FROM YOU. DIDN'T DADDY  
LIKE YOU? DIDN'T DADDY  
**LOVE** HIS BOY?

**CERTAINLY** DADDY LOVED HIS BOY!  
HE CREATED HIM, DIDN'T HE?  
DADDY'S JUST PLAYING HIDE AND  
SEEK. HAPPILY YOU LUMBERED  
OFF AFTER DADDY AND **FOUND**  
HIM! DADDY WASN'T VERY GOOD  
AT **HIDING**.



**STAY  
BACK!**  
DAMN YOU  
CHILD, OR  
I'LL...

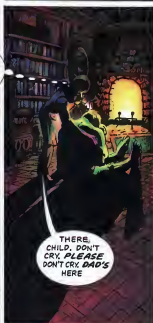


SNIFF!



WELL OF  
ALL THE... H-HE'S  
**CRYING!** BUT  
WHY...?

I GET  
IT! I'VE  
**SCOLDED** HIM,  
AND HE DOESN'T  
KNOW **WHY**.



THERE,  
CHILD, DON'T  
**CRY.** PLEASE  
DON'T CRY. **DAD'S**  
HERE





AND THAT WAS THE LAST TIME  
DADDY EVER MADE YOU **UNHAPPY**.  
WASN'T IT CHILD? THE FOLLOWING  
YEARS WERE FULL OF LOVE. YOU  
DIDN'T CARE ABOUT THE WORLD  
BEYOND YOUR FATHER'S LONELY  
HOUSE... IT AND DADDY WERE  
ALL YOU DESIRED.

THEN ONE NIGHT, YOU HEARD DADDY TALKING TO SOME  
MEN. SO YOU SNEAKED DOWN TO SEE THEM. THEY  
WERE PLAYING **COPS AND ROBBERS** WITH DADDY.

BUT THEY PLAYED TOO **ROUGH** AND HURT DADDY...



LISTEN,  
DOC, WE KNOW  
YOU'RE A RECLUSE.  
YOU DON'T GO TO  
BANKS. WHERE DO  
YOU STASH YOUR  
MONEY?

I DON'T  
HAVE TIME FOR  
THE LIKES OF  
YOU.



MAKE  
TIME, OLD  
MAN!

**WHACK!**

AND THAT ANGERED YOU! NO ONE COULD PICK ON YOUR DADDY!

YOU HAD TO TEACH THESE BAD MEN A LESSON, SO YOU  
GRABBED HOLD OF THE ONE WHO HIT DADDY AND  
ANGRILY **SQUEEZED HIS THROAT...**



W-WHAT  
KIND OF  
THING IS THAT?



...UNTIL THE FUNNY  
LITTLE GURGling NOISES  
HE MADE HAD **CEASED**,  
AND HIS FACE HAD  
TURNED A SOFT BLUE.

**WHUG!**

AND AS FOR THE OTHER DAD MAN...



AND THEN YOU SCURRED UPSTAIRS BEFORE DADDY AWAKE TO FIND YOU LIP PAST YOUR BEDTIME

YOU DIDN'T SEE DADDY AWAKE. YOU DIDN'T SEE THE LOOK OF HORROR ON HIS FACE WHEN HE SAW WHAT YOU HAD DONE.

GOD! I'VE CREATED A MONSTER...! WHAT KIND OF BLOODTHIRSTY... BUT NO! CHILD IS THE SAME AS ANY OTHER KID.

HE'S NO DIFFERENT FROM THE LITTLE GIRL WHO THROWS SAND IN HER FRIEND'S EYES OR THE BOY WHO DESTROYS HIS BROTHER'S TOYS.

CHILD IS JUST... STRONGER. THAT'S ALL HIS MIND ISN'T READY TO CONTROL THE POWER HIS BODY AFFORDS HIM.

MORE YEARS PASSED. FUNNY THINGS WERE BEGINNING TO HAPPEN TO GADDY. HIS HAIR WAS GETTING LIGHTER AND ALL DAY LONG HE SAT IN A FUNNY METAL CHAIR WITH WHEELS! IF DADDY WAS CHANGING, WHY WASN'T CHILD?

AND FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A LONG TIME, YOU WERE SAD BECAUSE DADDY BEGAN TO CRY, YOU COULD NOT SEE THE TEARS... BUT YOU KNEW OF HIS SORROW...



CHILD, I'VE SOME SAD NEWS. MY GOOD FRIEND AND OUR OLD LANDLORD JERRY LIEDEA MAN PASSED AWAY LAST NIGHT. POOR JERRY, YOU REMEMBER ME TELLING YOU OF HIM...?



HE WAS A GOOD FRIEND CHILD I LOVED HIM!



IT WAS UPON THAT VERY SAME DAY, AS YOU WERE PLAYING IN YOUR SAND-BOX, THAT DADDY HAD AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR.

HENRY!  
HENRY LIEDER-  
MAN! HOW YOU'VE  
GROWN SO, BOY!  
I HARDLY KNEW  
YOU...

I'VE NO  
TIME FOR  
COURTESIES,  
DR. CLERVEL.  
IF YOU'LL JUST  
ALLOW ME TO  
SAY MY PIECE,  
I'LL BE  
GONE.

CERTAINLY,  
HENRY. COME  
IN!

THE VISIT WAS **HARDLY** A PLEASANT ONE.

...AND THIS PROSPECTOR TELLS ME THAT THERE IS A **FORTUNE** IN OIL UNDER THIS HOUSE!

I WANT THAT OIL **BADLY**, DR. CLERVEL. AS MY FATHER'S SUCCESSOR, I **DEMAND** YOU LEAVE HERE IMMEDIATELY!

**HOLD ON, HENRY.** ACCORDING TO JERRY'S WILL, SHOULD I COMPLETE THE LAST RENTAL PAYMENT DUE NEXT WEEK, THIS HOUSE BELONGS TO **ME!**

THEN I'LL **BUY** THE DAMN HOUSE FROM YOU, DOCTOR ...!

NO HENRY. I **CANNOT** SELL THE HOUSE. SOMEONE WILL **NEED** IT WHEN I'M GONE.

THEN I'M SORRY TOO, OLD MAN!

ARGHHH!

YOU **HEARD** THE DEATH SCREAM, DIDN'T YOU, CHILD? WASN'T THAT WHY YOU SUDDENLY DROPPED YOUR TOYS AND CAME RUNNING INTO THE HOUSE... RUNNING INTO WHERE THERE HAD BEEN **LOVE** AND **LIFE**... TO WHERE THERE NOW LAY ONLY **COLDNESS** AND **DEATH**?

AND YOU **HELD** DADDY FOR A LONG WHILE IN YOUR ARMS, GENTLY **ROCKING** HIM... GENTLY WHIMPERING YOUR WORDLESS **PRAYER**.

BUT IT DIDN'T **HELP!** DADDY WAS **DEAD**, CHILD. IT WAS A HARD CONCEPT TO GRASP. DADDY WAS **GONE!**

THE FIRST PANGS OF GRIEF  
ARE NOT YET OVER WHEN YOU  
HEAR THEM...THE FOOTSTEPS  
ASCENDING THE STAIRS  
FROM DADDY'S LABORATORY!!

TENDERLY, YOU PLACE DADDY  
BACK UPON THE UNCARING,  
BLOOD-STAINED FLOOR.  
QUIETLY YOU *HIDE*, LETTING  
THE FOOTSTEPS GET CLOSER  
AND CLOSER!



AND WITH EACH FOOTFALL  
THE *MATE* WELLS UP IN-  
SIDE YOU. YOUR BLOOD  
BOILS AND YOUR FINGERS  
ITCH FOR THE FEEL OF  
FLESH. SUDDENLY, THE  
MAN *APPEARS*...

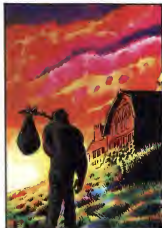


... HE *SEES* YOU...

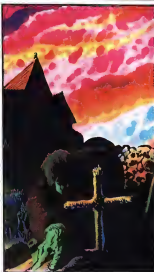


OH MY  
GOD!

AND YOU ARE UPON HIM!



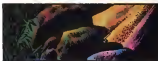
IT IS ALMOST MORNING NOW. THE  
SKY IS BLEEDING UPON THE HORIZON  
AND THE NOCTURNAL CRICKETS ARE  
OUTDONE BY THE SONGS OF THE  
DAWN SPARROWS.



ONE LAST *PRAYER*, CHILD. ONE LAST  
*WHIMPER* AT THE SANDBOX GRAVE.



ONE *LAST* LOOK, CHILD, AT THE  
*HOME* YOU HAVE LOVED SO DEARLY...



ONE LAST *SOB*, AND YOU ARE  
*OFF*, PUSHING YOUR WAY PAST  
THE SWING SET WHICH NOW  
DISPLAYS A *GRISLY* NEW  
ADDITION...THE GENTLY  
SWAYING *BODY* OF  
*HENRY LIEDERMAN*.

NOW IT *BEGINS* CHILD...YOUR  
JOURNEY INTO A WORLD YOU  
KNOW *NOTHING* ABOUT!

# Prologue:

**SALEM 1774... IN THE WARM GLOW OF THE FIRELIGHT, THIRTEEN LITHE BODIES DANCED ACROSS THE MOONLESS NEW ENGLAND COUNTRYSIDE. THEIRS WAS A DANCE MACABRE... A RITUAL DANCE OF THE DEAD... AND THE GROUND THEY TROD WAS PROFANED BY THE PUISSANCE OF WITCHCRAFT.**



**KARYN HAINING**, HER SOFT EYES DISGUISED THE FERVID PASSIONS WITHIN, DANCED IN FRENZIED, EROTIC ABANDON... AS THOUGH THE FURIOUS MOTION WOULD SOMEHOW DRIVE THE HATRED AND BITTERNESS FROM HER BODY...



OH, **HOLLAND** WHY HAVE YOU FORCED ME INTO THIS? I COULD HAVE BEEN SO GOOD TO YOU!

HER THOUGHTS GO BACK! SHE RECALLS HOW ONE NIGHT EARLIER, THE DANCING WAS OF A DIFFERENT NATURE. THEN, THE VILLAGE SQUARE WAS GLOWED GENTLY IN THE GASLIGHT... ALIVE, WITH JOGULAR FACES AND FLUTTERING SKI...

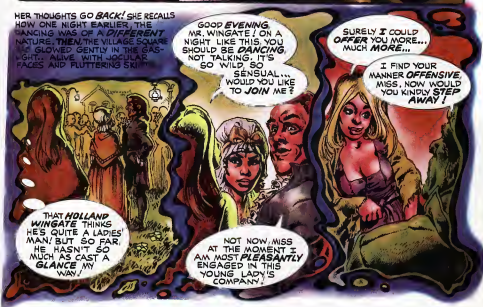
GOOD EVENING, MR. WINGATE! ON A NIGHT LIKE THIS, YOU SHOULD BE DANCING, NOT TALKING. IT'S SO WILD SO SENSUAL... WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN ME?

SURELY I COULD OFFER YOU MORE... MUCH MORE...


I FIND YOUR MANNER OFFENSIVE, MISS, NOW WOULD YOU KINDLY STEP AWAY!

THAT **HOLLAND WINGATE** THINKS HE'S QUITE A LADIES' MAN! BUT SO FAR, HE HASN'T SO MUCH AS CAST A GLANCE MY WAY!

NOT NOW, MISS AT THE MOMENT I AM MOST PLEASANTLY ENGAGED IN THIS YOUNG LADY'S COMPANY!



THE DRUMS CEASED AND THE DANCING WAS ARRESTED. SILENTLY, THE COVEN GATHERED AROUND THE ANCIENT STONE ALTAR, EACH WITH THEIR OWN DARK THOUGHTS...



YOU MADE A FOOL OF ME BEFORE THE WHOLE VILLAGE, **HOLLAND WINGATE** FOR THAT, YOU WILL SUFFER.



LET THE RITE OF CONJURATION BEGIN!


THE LAMB SQUEALED ONCE AS THE BLADE PLUNGED INTO ITS SOFT UNDERBELLY. THIS WAS NO LAMB OF GOD WHO WOULD CLEANSE THE WORLD OF EVIL... THIS WAS A LAMB THAT WOULD DWELL IN HELL...



LORD OF DARKNESS... WE, THE STEWARDS OF SATAN, ASK THEE TO SEND US...



...THY SERVANT THE **SIPHE**, TO AID US IN HOMAGE TO YOUR WILL...



THE CHANTING DRONE ON AND THE AIR PERMEATED WITH THE ODOUR OF SULPHUR AND BRIMSTONE!



ALL WATCHED IN AWE AND ANTICIPATION AS I WAS DRAWN FROM MY WORLD INTO THEIRS!



HOW DO I DESCRIBE THE PAIN THAT TORE AT MY  
BODY AS I PASSED THROUGH ETHEREAL BARRIERS  
TO THIS WORLD OF THE LIVING... A WORLD  
OF WHICH I HAD ONCE BEEN A PART!



THE **SUN-GOD** AND **PANTHA** ARE HARD ACTS TO FOLLOW!  
BUT THIS LITTLE TALE OF A **WITCH** AND HER PET **DEMON**  
OUGHT TO BE JUST THE CHANGE OF PACE YOU NEED, TO QUENCH  
YOUR THIRST FOR THE MACABRE...

GRADUALLY THE PAIN SUBSIDED AND I  
**HEARD** THE VOICE OF THE ONE WHO  
SUMMONED ME. IT WAS A **SOFT VOICE**...  
IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN **GENTLE** IF NOT  
TEMPERED BY YEARS OF **RESENTMENT**  
AND **SELF-PITY**...

# AS THOUGH THEY WERE LIVING!

HER **COMMANDS** ECHOED IN MY MIND, FAMILIAR WORDS  
OF **HATRED**... ONES I MIGHT HAVE USED **MYSELF**  
CENTURIES AGO, BUT THEN THERE CAME **OTHER**  
VOICES... **ANGRY VOICES**... AND ANOTHER KIND OF **HATRED**...



SO, EVIL  
ONE, YOU HAVE COME  
AS I **COMMANDED!**  
THEN LISTEN... THERE  
ARE TWO IN THE VILLAGE  
WHO HAVE **WRONGED**  
ME... I WANT THEM  
**PUNISHED!**



THERE **THEY** ARE,  
**MINISTER** JUST LIKE  
I **TOLD** YOU,  
THE **WITCHES!**

**FOUL**  
**MONSTERS!**  
WE MUST **DESTROY**  
EVERY LAST ONE  
OF THEM!



ALL THE **MADNESS** OF HELL  
COULDN'T COMPARE WITH THE  
**HORROR** WHEN THE **MINISTER**  
CONFRONTED THE **WITCHES**...

BUT HER WORDS WERE  
**SILENCED** BY THE THIN  
**SHAFT** THAT JUTTED  
FROM HER BREAST...

AND YET A COMMAND HAD BEEN  
**GIVEN!** I **TURNED** TOWARD THOSE  
**PITIFUL MORTALS**, AND...



SIPHE  
STOP THEM!... STOP THE... AHH



NO! **GAWD!**  
IT IS SOMETHING  
OUT OF **HELL**  
ITSELF...



THE **DEED** WAS DONE. I  
LOOKED AT THE STILL FORM  
OF MY **MISTRESS**. THE FIRES  
OF HER HATRED QUENCHED  
BY DEATH. YET IT WAS HER WILL  
THAT BROUGHT ME **INTO** THIS  
WORLD... HER VOICE THAT GAVE  
ME A MISSION I WAS  
**BOUND** TO OBEY...

AND SO I BECAME A **MAN**! CERTAINLY NOT THE ONLY  
ONE WHOSE MORTAL SHELL BELIED THE **TRUE**  
NATURE WITHIN...

AND **NOW** I **HUNT** THE ONE MY MISTRESS  
ORDERED ME TO **PUNISH**...! THE MAN  
NAMED **HOLLAND WINGATE**!



IN A VILLAGE THIS SIZE, IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR ME TO FIND THE ONES I SOUGHT. WE CHANCED TO MEET IN THE VILLAGE SQUARE, AND I INTRODUCED MYSELF AS **NATHAN BROWNE**.



NATHAN I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET MY FIANCEE, **SHELLY ALLAN**.

CHARMED, I'M SURE.

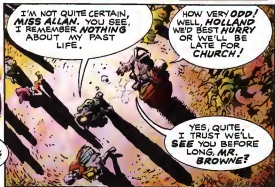
WHERE DO YOU COME FROM, MR. BROWNE?



I'M NOT QUITE CERTAIN, **MISS ALLAN**. YOU SEE, I REMEMBER **NOTHING** ABOUT MY PAST LIFE.

HOW VERY **ODD!** WELL, **HOLLAND** WE'D BEST **HURRY** OR WE'LL BE **LATE** FOR **CHURCH!**

YES, QUITE. I TRUST WE'LL SEE YOU BEFORE LONG, MR. **BROWNE?**



**HOLLAND WINGATE** DID NOT REALIZE HOW PROPHETIC THOSE PARTING **WORDS** HAD BEEN! THAT NIGHT, I **FOLLOWED** HIM THROUGH THE **TENEBOUS** BACK ROADS OF THE VILLAGE AS HE WALKED HOME, **UNSUSPECTING...**

SOMETHING INSIDE ME **PITIED** HIM. I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT **EVIL** HE HAD DONE THAT I MUST **SLAY** HIM, AND SOMEHOW I SENSED THAT HE DESERVED **BETTER** THAN THIS...



THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I MIGHT HAVE HAD THE WILL TO **RESIST...** TO **CHOOSE** BETWEEN **GOOD** AND **EVIL...**

BUT THAT TIME HAS **LONG** PASSED...

THERE IS **NO** **LONGER** CHOICE...

THERE IS ONLY **OBEDIENCE!**



**AAAAAAAH!!!**

MORNING CAME, AND MY DARK DEEPS OF THE NIGHT BEFORE WERE BROUGHT TO LIGHT...

OH, NATHAN! HOLLAND WAS FOUND MURDERED LAST NIGHT. IT'S SO TERRIBLE!

I'M SORRY, SHELLY, HAVE THEY CAUGHT THE MURDERER YET?

NO THEY THINK HE WAS ATTACKED BY SOME WILD ANIMAL! OH, NATHAN WOULD YOU WALK ME HOME, PLEASE? I PREFER NOT TO BE ALONE RIGHT NOW.

I FOUND MYSELF ODDLY ATTRACTED TO THIS GIRL. MY THOUGHTS GREW TROUBLED AND UNSETTLED, AS SHE AWAKENED IN ME FEELINGS THAT I THOUGHT HAD DIED CENTURIES AGO... WHAT WAS WORSE I KNEW SHE WAS MY NEXT VICTIM... THE LAST I WAS ORDERED TO SLAY...

WHEN WE REACHED HER HOME, I TOOK HER IN MY ARMS. SO WARM SO TRUSTING... I RECALLED ANOTHER MUCH LIKE HER... ONE I HAD ONCE LOVED IN SOME ANCIENT CENTURY... BEFORE I COMPROMISED MY HUMANITY TO A GOD OF SILVER... I DID NOT WANT HER DEAD... BUT I KNEW I HAD NO CHOICE...

SHELLY, THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO TELL YOU!

NOT NOW, NATHAN. THERE'S BEEN ENOUGH PAIN ALREADY, JUST HOLD ME CLOSE...

I DON'T KNOW HOW TO THANK YOU, NATHAN. IT'S SO IMPORTANT TO HAVE SOMEONE TO TURN TO AT A TIME LIKE THIS!





OH, **NATHAN**  
IF ONLY YOU KNEW  
HOW MUCH I **HATE**  
TO DO THIS.

BUT I  
HAVE NO CHOICE!  
MY **FATHER** AND I  
**DEVOTED** OUR LIVES TO  
**STAMPING OUT**  
**WITCHCRAFT...**  
WHERE EVER IT  
EXISTS...

MY **FATHER**  
**THE MINISTER...**  
**YOU KILLED** THE  
NIGHT HE CON-  
FRONTED THE  
**WITCHES!**

GLIK  
GLIK  
GLIK

I KNEW ONLY A  
**SIDHE** COULD HAVE  
KILLED MY FATHER  
AND HOLLAND SO  
**HORRIBLY...** THEN  
**YOUR** SUDDEN  
APPEARANCE IN THE  
VILLAGE, IT WAS  
TOO MUCH OF A  
**COINCIDENCE!**

...AND THE  
**BLOODSTAINS**  
ON YOUR JACKET  
...**THEN I KNEW**  
IT WAS **TRUE!**

I'M SORRY,  
NATHAN, TRULY  
SORRY!

**BORN OF FIRE,**  
**DIE BY FIRE...** ONLY  
**FLAME** CAN SEND YOU  
BACK FROM WHERE  
YOU CAME...

THAT WAS A **BRIGHT**  
IDEA, SHELLY HAD FOR  
GETTING RID OF NATHAN!  
GUESS SHE COULDN'T  
HACK ANY MORE OF  
HIS **SIDHE** LIFE...  
POOR, NATHAN'S  
**HEATED** UP OVER  
IT, TOO!

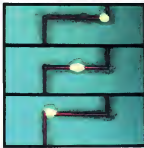
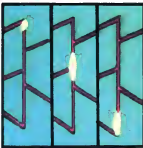
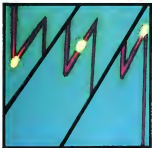
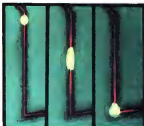
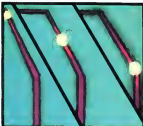
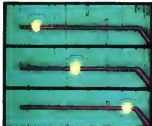
THIS IS A GAME CALLED **TOP TO BOTTOM!**



IT LOOKS EASY, DOESN'T IT? THE CUBE HAS MANY **PASSAGEWAYS** THAT CHANGE DIRECTION **EACH TIME** IT IS MOVED!



THE **CUBE** IS LIKE A **MAZE!** THE OBJECT OF THE GAME IS TO GET THE **LIGHT** FROM THE **TOP** TO THE **BOTTOM!** **ANYONE** CAN DO IT!



LOOKS **EASY**, DOESN'T IT? IF YOU **THINK** SO, ASK **HENRY!**



# TOP to BOTTOM

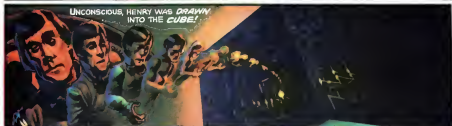
HENRY HAS BEEN *PLAYING* THIS *GAME* FOR MORE THAN  
120 YEARS AND *HE HASN'T WON YET!*



READY FOR  
SOME *FUN* AND *GAMES*,  
KIDS? *HENRY* IS! HE MAY NOT  
BE A *WINNER* BUT HE HAS A  
FEW *SURPRISES* IN *STORE*!  
SO LET'S *PLAY*  
*THROUGH!*



IN 1850, HENRY DISCOVERED THE CUBE IN A PAWN SHOP! BACK HOME, HENRY LEARNS EVEN MORE ABOUT THE CUBE...



THEN IT FADED OUT OF SIGHT!



IT WAS 1861! THE CIVIL WAR HAD STARTED! HENRY STARED AT THE NEWSPAPER IN *SHOCK*...DISBELIEF!





HENRY GOT A JOB AS A **STOCKBROKER!** BY THE  
TIME **PROHIBITION** ROLLED AROUND, HE WAS MAKING  
ENOUGH MONEY TO HAVE A **REALLY** GOOD TIME!



UNNOTICED, THE LIGHT **RACED** TO THE **BOTTOM** OF THE **CUBE!**

HENRY DID **NOT** HAVE A HAPPY AWAKENING!



IT SEEMS SO **HOPELESS!** PEOPLE HAVE **DIED**, GREAT NATIONS HAVE GONE MAD OR BEEN **DESTROYED!**

I WAS A **FOOL** TO THINK I COULD BECOME **RICH!** I'M JUST ONE TINY MAN...AND THERE ARE SO MANY **OTHER** THINGS I COULD HAVE CONCENTRATED ON! CURING **DISEASE...** HALTING WARS... SAYING **LIVES...**



YOU HAVE DONE THE **BEST** YOU COULD, OLD MAN!

YOU CANNOT BE **BLAMED** FOR YOUR SHORTCOMINGS AS A **MAN...** FOR THE SHORTCOMING KNOWN AS **GREED...** IT'S IN **ALL** MEN!



I WAS LEFT ON YOUR PLANET AS A **TEST** OF YOUR RACE. I **BROADCAST** AND **AMPLIFY** THE **EGO** OF EACH PLAYER...SO THAT THEY BECOME PART OF EVERY PERSON IN THE **WORLD!**

THAT IS HOW I... **WE** **CREATE** HISTORY!



YES, YOU ARE **GREEDY...** BUT SO ARE **ALL** MEN. YOU ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR **THAT!**

YOU MIGHT HAVE BROUGHT **PEACE** TO MAN-KIND, BUT YOUR **INNER** BEING AFFECTED HISTORY **OTHER-WISE!**



YES... A **CHILD** IS AT **PEACE** WITH HIMSELF... WITH **OTHERS!** A **CHILD** COULD HAVE MADE THIS WORLD A **PARADISE** THROUGH **ME!** YOU HAVE MADE IT A **LIVING HELL!**

YOU HAVE LEARNED **TOO LATE**, THAT **RICHES...** **WEALTH** MEAN **NOTHING!** BUT AN **EVIL** MAN WOULD HAVE **DESTROYED** IT COMPLETELY!



I CAN'T KEEP YOU **ALIVE** FOR MUCH LONGER AND IT IS TIME I HAD A NEW **PLAYER!**

YOU ARE **FREE!**



**FREE?**



YOU SHOULDN'T  
HAVE *HIT* HIM  
SO *HARD!*



DO YOU THINK  
THERE'S ANYTHING  
WORTH *TAKING?*

LET'S  
JUST GET  
*OUT* OF  
HERE!



HEY, THIS  
IS *GREAT!* LOOK,  
THERE'S A LOT OF  
*PATHS* INSIDE  
THE *CUBE*...

...AND THAT  
LIGHT *TRAVELS*  
ALONG THEM ...  
FROM *TOP* TO  
*BOTTOM!*



YOU KNOW  
WHAT I'M GOING TO  
*DO?* I'M GOING TO TAKE  
THIS HOME TONIGHT  
AND *PLAY* WITH IT...WHILE  
I DROP A LITTLE "  
*ACID!*"

MAN, I'LL  
BET THAT'LL BE  
THE *FREAKIEST*  
TRIP *EVER!*

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THE GOVERNMENT EVER DECIDED TO MASTER THE MYSTIC ARTS? IT'S ALL SPILLED OUT FOR YOU IN...

# DEMON IN THE COCKPIT



**SMELL:** STRETCHES OF  
BURNING, BLAZING *DESERT*...  
A SEARING, NOON-DAY SUN...  
THE *UTAH BADLANDS!*

**HEAR:** THE RAUCOUS WHINE OF A *JET-COPTER*... STEEL  
RUBBED PRODUCT OF A *POLLUTION-FRAUGHT* TECHNOLOGY!

**SEE:** TWO MEN... TENSE, TIGHT-LIPPED! THEY  
*STARE* MUTELY AHEAD AT THE BLEAK, HEAT-  
SCORCHED *NOTHINGNESS!*



WE'RE  
ALMOST  
THERE!

THEN, THE ONE  
IN THE PILOT'S  
CHAIR *TURNS* AND  
*SPEAKS*...

THE PASSENGER CURTLY NODS HIS  
HEAD IN *ACKNOWLEDGMENT*? HE  
MAKES NO OTHER REPLY! *PERHAPS*  
IT IS BECAUSE HIS FURROWED BROW...

...HIS WRINKLE-WORRIED FEATURES  
ARE *CONCERNED* WITH MORE  
IMPORTANT MATTERS... LIKE  
*WAR* AND *DEATH*...



PERHAPS!



STORY: RICH MARGOPOULOS / ART: RICH CORBEN



ROTORS BEATING IN A MAD, CIRCULAR **FRENZY**... THE AIRCRAFT ALIGNS AT THE BASE OF A MASSIVE **MOUNTAIN-FORTRESS**...



THIS IS THE PLACE?

YES, SIR! THE ONLY WAY TO REACH IT IS THE WAY WE DID... BY AIR!



VERY IMPRESSIVE STRUCTURE!

STILL, WITH ALL THE **MILLIONS** MY COMMITTEE APPROPRIATED THE PENTAGON COULD AFFORD IT!



GOOD AFTERNOON, SENATOR ARMSTRONG!

YOU MUST BE **JACOBS**! TELL ME... IS IT ALWAYS THIS BLASTED HOT?

ONLY WHEN ALL HELL'S ABOUT TO BREAK LOOSE! SORRY, IT'S AN INSIDE JOKE!



JUST TAKE A SEAT, SENATOR, AND WE'LL START THE TOUR!

**DRIVER!** ALPHA SECTION! LEVEL FIVE!



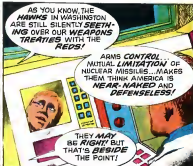
YOU COULDN'T HAVE ARRIVED AT A MORE **OPPORTUNE** TIME! WE'RE SCHEDULED TO RUN A TEST IN HALF AN HOUR!

WE'RE ON THE VERGE OF A **BREAKTHROUGH**... AND YOU MAY WITNESS IT, SENATOR...



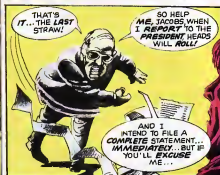
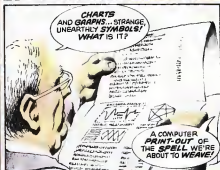
A **TREMENDOUS** BREAKTHROUGH!

THE VEHICLE HUMS ALONG UNTIL IT ARRIVES AT **CONTROL CENTRAL!**



"THIS UNDERGROUND COMPLEX... **PROJECT MYSTIC WAND**... IS WORKING ON A NEW FORM OF WARFARE... ONE THAT WILL MAKE ATOMIC ATTACK OBSOLETE! IT BEGAN WHEN ONE OF OUR RESEARCHERS STUMBLED ACROSS THE **AXIOM!**"





MARIANO!  
THE PHYSICIST  
FROM CAL  
TECH?



CURIOUS?  
**GOOD!**

THE  
DOCTOR RECENTLY  
COMPLETED A STUDY  
ON WITCHCRAFT... AND  
FED THE RESULTS IN-  
TO THE PROJECT'S  
COMPUTERS!

OUR  
DATA BANKS  
DEVELOPED THE  
SPELL YOU WERE  
JUST LOOKING  
AT!

THE  
DOC'S GIVING  
US THE **HIGH**  
SIGN, MR. JACOBS...  
THE **SIGNAL** TO  
START!

OKAY, TOM,  
ACTIVATE THE  
VIDEO RECORDERS!  
I WANT THIS **ALL**  
ON TAPE!

ACTUALLY,  
THE GOWN-LIKE  
TRAPPING **ISN'T**  
NECESSARY!

IT'S  
JUST THAT DR.  
MARIANO FEELS  
MORE **SECURE**  
WITH THEM... A  
**PSYCHOLOGICAL**  
CRUTCH, SO TO  
SPEAK!

REGISTERS  
ARE PICKING UP  
**PSYCHIC ENERGY**...  
JAMMING **ALL**  
WAVE-LENGTHS!

AND  
THAT'S  
NOT ALL,  
**LOOK!**

A  
CHURNING  
**FUNNEL**... A  
SOFTLY SHIMMER-  
ING **VORTEX** OF  
LIGHT... IN  
MID-AIR!

**Y'SUR!**  
**EVILMOST**  
BEING... **LOWEST**  
ONE AMONG THE  
**FETID GODS!**  
**HEAR ME!**

THOUGH  
MY SOUL MAY  
**SUFFER ETERNAL**  
**DAMNATION...**  
I CALL THEE  
**FORTH!**



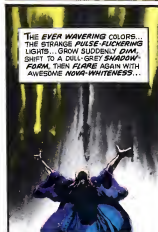
JACOBS!  
MAYBE WE HAD  
BETTER...

NO!

I KNOW  
WHAT YOU'RE  
THINKING... BUT  
THERE'S NO TURN-  
ING BACK...



...NO  
TURNING BACK  
AT ALL!



THE EVER WAVERING COLORS...  
THE STRANGE PULSE-FLICKERING  
LIGHTS... GROW SUDDENLY DIM,  
SHIFT TO A DULL-GRAY SHADOW-  
FORM, THEN FLARE AGAIN WITH  
AWESOME NOWA-WHITENESS...



GOOD LORD!  
MARIANO'S  
DONE IT!

DON'T  
WASTE TIME  
TALKING!

OPEN THE  
PORTAL... GET THE  
DOCTOR OUT OF THERE  
BEFORE HE GETS  
KILLED!

... AND WHERE THE  
EERIE, ASTRAL DISPLAY  
ONCE DANCED, A  
DEMON STANOS!

SILKEN ROBES RUSTLING...  
THE AGED MAN SCURRIES  
FOR THE SECURITY OF THE  
STEEL-LINED SHADOWS!



AND WATCHING HIM IS THE DEMON! TWIN  
EYES LIKE DEVIL-DARK COALS BEGIN TO  
BLAZE AN UNGODLY GREEN!



THE TOWERING BEING TAKES A CRASHING STEP FOR-  
WARD AS IF TO FOLLOW THE MORTAL WHO BECKONED  
HIM FROM BEYOND THE LOWER DEPTHS...



...AND SCREAMS!



FOR THE FIRST TIME IN NAMELESS ETERNITY, Y'SURIL  
FEELS THE FEARSOME BITE OF NERVE-NUMBING PAIN!

KEEP  
THOSE ANTI-  
MATTER SHACKLES  
TRAINED...

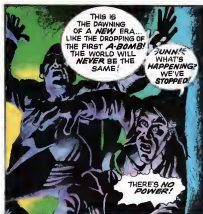
ON HIM!  
ONE SLIP-UP  
AND OUR TEN-TON  
PLAYMATE IS  
LIABLE TO PLAY  
KING KONG  
WITH THE  
BASE!



THE  
CREW'LL HANDLE  
THINGS TILL WE  
RETURN!

LET'S DROP  
DOWN AND SEE  
MARIANO... OFFER HIM  
OUR CONGRATU-  
LATIONS!







## MEET RICH CORBEN... THE MAN BEHIND THIS MADNESS!

Photograph by Bill Mondley



**M**ummies, demons, monsters and spacemen! After reading these ten tales by Rich Corben, one could come to think that that's all the poor boy has on his mind. Not so! Sometimes he thinks about ghosts and madmen, killers and werewolves, too!

And there are even occasions when he must think about his beautiful wife, Donna, their impish daughter, Beth, and their home in America's heartland, Kansas City, Missouri. For behind the Rich Corben the public sees, the Rich Corben who creates worlds of escapism for the masses, is the thirty-three-year-old kid with a quick smile, a crippling handshake and a shy midwestern drawl.

Rich got his start in comics way back in 1968. His first work was published in an amateur newspaper called *The Voice of Comixdom*. (A newspaper created by yours truly, the editor of this magazine, no less.) There, he did an obscure little strip entitled "Rowlf!" It won him a couple of awards.

But Rich didn't really get rolling in the comics until he

began his underground projects. Underground comics are small, independently produced books, not released to the mass market. Rich became famous for his stories about men who could never find pants with the correct inseam size, and women who most assuredly became hunchbacks in their later lives.

He picked up a couple of awards for these, too.

Rich jumped from the pages of the underground into the Warren magazines in 1970. He did a couple of stories, a couple of covers, then disappeared for a couple of years.

He spent most of his days working for an educational/industrial film company in Kansas City... while nights were reserved for his pet projects: losing money on his own underground comic, *Fantagor*. And losing even more on his own animated cartoon, "Neverwhere!"

More awards followed. Plus a bit of notoriety.

Rich returned to the Warren magazines in 1973, when we offered him the opportunity to color his own artwork. He jumped at the chance... and we jumped at the prospect of having Rich Corben back in harness.

He's produced more than a dozen color epics to date. Each has been accepted with accolades of raves from our readers. And Rich has taken home a couple more awards!

The future? Rich has only one goal. "Let's push out the limits of comics, and go about it in a whole new, exciting and colorful way!"

He's doing it... all by himself! And he'll probably pick up a couple more awards in the process.

**Bill DuBay**  
Editor

# PREVIEW

